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ARMY LODGES

DURING THE

REVOLUTION.

Parker

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ARMY LODGES.

BY WOR.·. BRO.·. HENRY J. PARKER.

Read before the Worshipful Masters' Association in the Masonic Temple, Boston, March 7th, 1884.

Regimental Lodges appear to have been warranted in the British army early in the last century, and have undoubtedly exerted a large influence in spreading the tenets of Freemasonry in all parts of the civilized globe.

The earliest warrant issued for forming an Army Lodge in this country, was issued by the St. John's Grand Lodge in 1756, when "the R. W. Master authorized by his charter of deputation the R. W. ~~Jeremy~~ Richard Gridley, Esqr.: to congregate all Free and Accepted Masons in the present expedition against Crown Point, and form them into one or more lodges as he should think fit, and to appoint Wardens and other officers to a Lodge appertaining."

Jeremy Gridley was Grand Master in 1754–5. "He acquired great reputation in his profession as a lawyer. He was Attorney-General of the Province, and was distinguished for his classical attainments and learning, as well as for his great legal ability." He was made a Mason in the First Lodge, May 11th, 1748, and was its Master in 1754.

In 1758, a warrant or dispensation was granted to the "R. W. Edward Huntingford, to hold a Lodge in his Majesty's 28th Regiment stationed at Louisburg." April 14th, 1759, "The R. W. Abraham Savage, was authorized to congregate all Free and Accepted Masons in the expedition against Canada, at Lake George, or elsewhere, into one or more Lodges." Abraham Savage was a member of the First Lodge, and Grand Secretary from 1767–71.

June 24th, a dispensation was granted to Col. Joseph Ingersoll, to hold a Lodge at Crown Point.

It thus appears that Masonry was in a vigorous condition in the Province prior to the Revolution, and its benefits prized by those who were to engage in the hazardous expeditions against Crown Point and Canada. The character and high

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standing of the brethren appointed to organize these lodges, shows that the Provincial Grand Masters exercised their powers with great prudence and discretion.

It is a matter of regret that the history of these travelling lodges is entirely lost.

With the arrival of the British troops in Boston Harbor, just before the breaking out of the Revolutionary War, came several Regimental Lodges; for a time their presence was welcomed by the Lodges of the town, but in the controversy which soon began to rage between the Ancients and Moderns, their presence only added fuel to the flames. This controversy was a fruitful source of trouble in the Lodges, which happily ended with the Union in 1792.

The Lodges attached to the 14th and 29th Royal Regiments took part in the formation of the Massachusetts Grand Lodge in 1769, and furnished the two Wardens, Gen. Warren being the Grand Master.

In the beginning of the year 1776, the American army was encamped about Boston, the Connecticut line had their quarters in Roxbury; early in February a number of the Connecticut brethren in the line started a movement to establish an Army Lodge in their camp. The meetings of the Grand Lodge having been suspended, application was made to the Hon. John Rowe, Grand Master, for a dispensation, which he was pleased to grant to "Joel Clark, Esqr., one of the petitioners, appointing and constituting him Master of the American Union Lodge, now erected in Roxbury, or wherever your body shall remove on the continent of America, provided, it is where no Grand Master is appointed. The dispensation is dated Anno Mundi 15th February, 1776, of Salvation 1776, and is signed by Richard Gridley, D. G. M., William Burbeck, J. G. W." *

It appears by the *Minute Book* that the number of members at the establishment of the Lodge was eleven, six M.·.M.·., four F.·.C.·., one E.·.A.·. From the formation of the Lodge in Feb-

* "There was an important limitation put upon Army Lodges by Massachusetts Grand Lodge, prior to the Revolution (1773), which I believe the other Provincial Grand Lodges held in common with her, viz.: that an Army Lodge should not make a Mason of a civilian, without express authority and permission from the Grand Lodge within whose territory it was commorant at the time." — *Address of R.·. W.·. Charles Levi Woodbury, Proceedings Grand Lodge of Massachusetts, March 8th, 1884.*

ruary, 1776, to November, 1779, there were thirteen members admitted, and twenty candidates initiated, all commissioned officers.

The history of the Lodge is full of interest, a few hasty sketches from its records is all the time allotted will admit.

With the evacuation of Boston, in March, the Connecticut line removed to New York, where the last meeting was held on the 15th August, 1776. The next entry reads, "The British troops having landed a large body on Long Island, the attention of the American Army was necessary to repel them. On the ever memorable twenty-seventh of August, the R. W. Joel Clark, Elisha Hopkins, Ozias Bissell, Joseph Jewett, Nathaniel Gore being taken prisoners; and on the thirteenth of September, Brother James Chapman, Micajah Gleason killed; William Cleavland and John P. Willys taken prisoners; and Bro. Otho H. Williams taken prisoner at Fort Washington, by which misfortune the Lodge was deprived of its Master and some most worthy members, and many other worthy Brethren were called to act in separate departments, wherefore the Lodge closed without day."

Col. Clark died in captivity.

The Lodge remained dormant until February 7th, 1779, when the Secretary, Bro.·. Jonathan Heart, called the brethren to meet at Mrs. Sandford's, at Reading, Conn., during the months of March, April, and May; the Lodge held three and sometimes four meetings a month.

A Lodge of Emergency was called on the 25th of March, after conferring the E.·. A.·. Degree on three candidates, the record states: "Lodge closed for a space, Procession began at half past four P. M., in the following order:—

"1. Bro. Whitney to clear the way.

"2. The Wardens with their wands.

"3. The Youngest Brother with the bag.

"4. Brethren by Juniority.

"5. The Worshipful Master, with the Treasurer on his right hand, supporting the sword of Justice, and the Secretary on his left hand, supporting the Bible, Square, and Compasses.

"6. Music: playing the Entered Apprentices March.

"Proceeded to Esqr. Hawley's, where Bro. Little delivered

a few sentiments on Friendship, after dinner toasts were given interspersed with music." Among the toasts was the favorite one given on all festive occasions of the Fraternity, "To the memory of Warren, Montgomery and Wooster." The Secretary closes his record with the pleasing information "that the Lodge closed in good time."

June 24th, 1779, found the Lodge at Nelson's Point on the Hudson; in the early morning, the Lodge was called together to celebrate the Feast of St. John the Baptist. After the election and installation of officers, "the Lodge was closed till 10 o'clock A. M., then to meet with the Brethren from West Point and Constitution Island, the whole proceeded from Gen. Patterson's head-quarters to the 'Red House' or Robinson House on the opposite side of the river, in the following order:—

"1. Bro. Whitney to clear the way.

"2. The Band of Music with drums and fifes.

"3. The Wardens.

"4. The Youngest Brother with the bag.

"5. Brethren by Juniority.

"6. The Rev. Drs. Smith, Avery, and Hitchcock.

"7. The Master of the Lodge, with the Treasurer on his right hand supporting the sword of Justice, and the Secretary on the left supporting the Bible, Square, and Compasses.

"8. Bro. Binns to close, with Bros. Lourain and Dinsborough on the flanks opposite the centre."

After the usual ceremonies, the Lodge retired to a bower in front of the house, where being joined by his Excellency, Gen. Washington and family, an address was delivered to the brethren and a number of gentlemen collected on the occasion, by the Rev. Dr. Hitchcock, followed by an address to the brethren in particular, by Bro.·. Hull (who was then Major, afterwards Gen. Hull of the war of 1812), this closed the formal exercises of the day; the conclusion of the Secretary's record is as follows: "His Excellency Bro. Washington having returned to the barge attended by the Wardens and Secretary of the Lodge amidst a crowd of Brethren, the Music playing 'God save America,' and embarked, his departure was announced by three cheers from the shore, answered by three from the barge, the music beating the Grenadiers' March."

The expenses of the day are given as follows: "Cr. by Club of 107 Brethren £409,12.0.; Expenses, £393.9. 0.; Allowance to the Brethren of West Point for mistakes in change, etc., £3.5.0." This seemingly extravagant collation is accounted for when we remember the depreciated state of the currency of that time. Felt, in his historical account of the Massachusetts currency, states, "that while the old emission money of Congress was legally set at the rate of seventy-five dollars for one of specie in our Commonwealth, it fell to a hundred and twenty in Philadelphia."

The winter of 1779, found the army at Morristown, N. J., where the Lodge was opened on the 15th of December, and on the 27th following, the Feast was celebrated; in the list of visitors, the name of Bro.·. Washington is first recorded. The sermon on the occasion was delivered by Rev. Dr. Baldwin, of the Connecticut line. Amidst all the toil and privation of camp life, the brethren of the army faithfully kept the "Feast," and under difficulties, which at the present time can hardly be appreciated. Before the Lodge closed, a petition was read representing the present state of Freemasonry to the several Deputy Grand Masters in the United States of America, desiring them to adopt some measures for appointing a Grand Master over said States.

The petition after reciting the condition of affairs as then existing, continues, "We therefore most earnestly request that the present Provincial Grand Masters in the respective said United States, would take some measure for the appointment of a Grand Master in, and over the said thirteen United States of America, either by nominating a proper person for that office, whose abilities and rank in life shall answer the importance of that conspicuous and elevated station, and transmitting such nomination to our Mother Lodge in Britain, that the appointment may be made, or in such other manner as shall to them appear most eligible. And we further beg leave to express our wishes, that the several Provincial Grand Masters in these States would, in the intermediate time, enter into unanimous and vigorous measures for checking the growing irregularities in the society, cementing the different branches, erasing the distinctions between Ancient and Modern in these

States, that the craft may be established in unanimity, the established principles of its institutions more universally extended, and that our conduct may not only be the admiration of men in this world, but receive the final applause of the Grand Architect of the Universe in the other, where there is nothing but light and love."

It was voted that the petition be circulated through the different lines of the Army, and that a committee be appointed from the different Lodges in the Army from each Line, and from the Staff of the Army, to convene on the first Monday in February, at Morristown, N. J.

The convention assembled at Morristown on the day appointed, and was composed of the following delegates: Bro.·. John Pierce, M.·. M.·., delegated to represent the Masons in the Military Line of the State of Massachusetts Bay and Washington Lodge No 10; Bro.·. Jonathan Heart, M.·. M.·., delegated to represent the Masons in the Military Line of the State of Connecticut and American Union Lodge; Bro.·. Chas. Graham, F.·. C.·., delegated to represent the Masons in the Military Line of the State of New York; Bro.·. John Sanford, delegated to represent the Masons in the Military Line of the State of New Jersey; Bro.·. George Tudor, delegated to represent the Masons in the Military Line of the State of Pennsylvania; Bro.·. Otho Holland Williams, delegated to represent the Masons in the Military Line of the State of Delaware; Bro.·. Mordaci Gist,* P.·. W.·. M.·., delegated to represent the Masons in the Military Line of the State of Maryland; Bro.·. Prentice Brown, M.·. M.·., delegated to represent St. John's Regimental Lodge; Bro.·. John Lawrence, P.·. W.·. M.·. delegated to represent the brothers in the Staff of the American Army; Bro.·. Thomas Machin, M.·. M.·., delegated to represent the Masons in the Corps of Artillery.

Bro.·. Gist was chosen President, and Bro.·. Otho Holland Williams, Secretary. Bro.·. Williams presented the address, which was unanimously adopted, and ordered to be forwarded to the several Provincial Grand Masters.

The convention probably represented the prevailing senti-

* Gen. Gist was Grand Master of South Carolina, 1790–91, he died in 1792, leaving two sons, one named Independent, and the other, States.

ment of the day in favor of a General Grand Lodge for the United States, with Washington for Grand Master. There seems to be little doubt but what the subject originated with the officers of the Army, who presented the petition to American Union Lodge, on December 27th, 1779. The subject was before the Grand Lodge of Pennsylvania, early in 1780, and Warren Lodge of Machias, Me. (then of this State), October 31st, of the same year, favored the project.

The Grand Lodge of this State in able report adopted January 9th, 1781, discountenanced the project.

From Morristown the army moved to the Hudson, where the Lodge met at the Robinson House until July 25th, 1780; meetings seem to have been suspended until March, 1782, when they were resumed and continued to be held in the Connecticut huts. June 24th, the Feast was observed. The Lodge proceeded to West Point, where they joined Washington Lodge, and marched from Gen. Patterson's house to the colonnade, where a collation was provided, and an oration delivered by Bro.·. John Brooks of the Massachusetts line. June 27th, the following vote was passed, "That Washington Lodge be requested to acquaint Worshipful Brother Brooks, that this body wish him to accept our very particular thanks for the polite and truly Masonic address with which he was pleased to honor the Brethren at the late festival of St. John the Baptist." Wor.·. Bro.·. Brooks was Gen. Brooks, afterwards Governor of this State.

The last meeting of the Lodge was held April 23, 1783, at Mr. Foot's, at West Point. *

Prominent among the members of American Union Lodge was Gen. Rufus Putnam. He was born at Sutton, Mass., in 1738, and died at Marietta, O., in 1824. His trade was that of a millwright, but the occupation had little interest for him, and as early as 1757 he enlisted as a private soldier in the expedition against Canada. He afterwards settled in New Braintree in this State. In the war of the Revolution, he was in 1775, Lieut.-Col. in Brewer's regiment; during the siege of Boston,

* A copy of the original *Minute Book*, to which this writer is indebted for the above, can be found in the Proceedings of the Grand Lodge of Connecticut, 1789 (Reprint.)

he was employed as an engineer in constructing the siege works, and in 1776, was chief engineer of the defences of New York; he was commissioned a Brigadier-General in 1783, and was Aid to Gen. Lincoln in the suppression of Shay's insurrection.

Hayden in his *Washington's Masonic Compeers*, alludes to Putnam as follows: "By both Washington and Lafayette he was highly esteemed as a man and an officer. With both he became connected in the fraternal bonds of Masonic fellowship. He was not a Mason when he entered the army of the Revolution, but he became one in the army of 1779.

"The Festival of St. John the Baptist, was celebrated by the Masonic brethren in the army, that year upon the Hudson, near West Point, and Washington joined, as was his custom, with the Military Lodge there on that occasion. Many other distinguished officers of the American army were present as Masons, and the ceremonies were highly impressive. Two days after this, Col. Putnam applied to the Lodge under whose charter these proceedings were held, to be made a Mason. Col. Putnam's application was favorably received, and at the same meeting was made a Mason. The place of meeting of the Lodge when he received his degrees, was at the Robinson House, on the east bank of the Hudson, about two miles below West Point.

"From the close of 1783 to the commencement of 1788, General Putnam was engaged in organizing a company to settle on the far-off but fertile banks of the Ohio, and in the spring of 1788 he went there as general agent of a New England company, accompanied by about forty settlers. They pitched their tents at the mouth of the Muskingum River, formed a settlement there, and called it Marietta. Here suspecting hostility from the neighboring Indians, they built a fort, and called it *Campus Martius*. This was the beginning of that tide of emigration to the Ohio, which soon spread over all its rich valleys; and General Putnam may justly be regarded as the father of its pioneers.

"Soon after the first settlement of Marietta, the old charter of the American Union Lodge, which General Putnam had joined in 1779, was used to convene a Lodge in that place. Jonathan Heart, the last Master of the Lodge during the Rev-

olution, and many of its members, had removed since the war to the new settlements on the Ohio, and here they reopened their Lodge. Of this Lodge at Marietta, General Putnam became the first Junior Warden. He continued an officer or active member of the American Union Lodge, and when in 1808, Lodges had been multiplied in that new State, and a convention met to form a Grand Lodge there, they unanimously made choice of him as their first Grand Master. He never enjoyed the honor, however, of presiding over that body for he was then three score and ten years old, and the infirmities of age were upon him. At the next annual communication, therefore, he resigned the office by the following letter to the Grand Lodge :—

"'To the Grand Lodge of the Most Ancient and Honorable Society of Free and Accepted Masons for the State of Ohio, your Brother sendeth *greeting :*

"' It was with high sensibility and gratitude I received the information that the Grand Convention of Masons at Chilicothe, in January, last, elected me to the office of Grand Master of our Most Ancient and Honorable Fraternity. But, however sensibly I feel the high honor done me by the Convention, and am disposed to promote the interests of the Craft in general, and in this State in particular, I must decline the appointment. My sun is far past its meridian, and is almost set. A few sands only remain in my glass. I am unable to undergo the necessary labors of that high and important office. I am unable to make you a visit at this time, without a sacrifice and hazard of health, which prudence forbids.

"' May the great Architect, under whose all-seeing eye all Masons profess to labor, have you in his holy keeping, that when our labors here are finished, we may, through the merits of Him that was dead but is now alive and lives forevermore, be admitted into that temple not made with hands, eternal in the heavens. Amen. So prays your friend and brother, RUFUS PUTNAM.

"'MARIETTA, December 26, 1808.'"

He survived for many years, and when, upon the first day of May, 1824, he died, all said a good man had gone to his rest.

Intimately connected with the history of American Union Lodge, and more closely to us as Massachusetts Masons, was Washington Lodge, No. 10. The dispensation was issued by Joseph Webb, as Grand Master of the Massachusetts Grand

Lodge. The Constitution of the Lodge is given in the returns as follows:—

"New York State, West Point,
Thursday the 11th November, A. M., 5779.

"At the Grand Lodge held by authority from Joseph Webb, Esq., Grand Master of Masons for the State of Massachusetts Bay, delegated to Jona. Heart, Esq., Master of the American Union Lodge, appointing him his Proxy for certain purposes.

"Present: Jonathan Heart, Grand Master, by Proxy.
Richard Sill, D. Grand Master.
Simson Belding, S. G. Warden.
Daniel Lunt, Grand Treasurer.
John Pierce, Jr., Grand Secretary.
Thomas Binn, Grand Tyler.

"After the usual business, the Deputy informed the Lodge, Bro. John Patterson, Benjamin Tupper, John Greaton, Esqrs., Timothy Whiting, Joseph Foot, William Burley, Billy Porter, John Jones, Henry Sewall, John Williams, Elisha Skinner William Story, and Richard Welsh, all Ancient Free and Accepted Masons, resident in the State of Massachusetts Bay, in N. E., having obtained a charter from the Grand Lodge at Boston, granting them the privileges of Masonry, etc., were now waiting and begged permission to present themselves to be duly formed and erected into a regular Lodge. They were accordingly admitted, and conformable to ancient custom, formed and erected into a just and regular Lodge, etc., etc., etc., by the name of Washington Lodge, No. 10.

"Our faithful and worthy Brother John Patterson was also presented to the Rt. Worshipful, to be their Master, and agreeable to ancient usage, was duly installed and invested with the powers and honors, etc., etc., etc., belonging to the same.

"The Master elect then entered upon his office, appointed Br. Benjamin Tupper to be his Senior Warden, and Br. John Greaton to be his Junior Warden, presented them to the Rt. Worshipful for his approbation. They were accordingly approved and confirmed to the same, etc., etc., etc., to each the proper charges given, etc., etc., etc., with united congratulations and earnest requests for health, peace and safety to all entitled to the Mason's prayer. Lodge closed.

By order of the Grand Master,
Richard Sill, D. G. Master.

Attest: Jno. Pierce, Prov. G. Sec'y."

With the exception of the returns of members on file in the archives of the Grand Lodge there are but few facts to be gleaned in regard to the history of the Lodge. It met at the Robinson House and at the Temple, and in connection with the American Union Lodge celebrated the feasts.

The returns show a membership of 250 brethren, officers of different rank in the army, and many of them held high civil offices after the war; from facts gathered regarding 114 of the members, those relating to the Masters and Wardens may be of interest.

General Patterson, the first Master, was born in Farmington, Conn. He graduated at Yale College in 1762, and removed to Lenox, Mass., in 1774; he was a member of the Provincial Congress, in 1774–75, Colonel of Minute-men, and served with distinguished honor during the Revolution. At the close of the war, he was appointed Chief Justice of the County Court of Lisle. He was a member of the New York Constitutional Convention of 1801; member of Congress, 1803–5, and Vice-President of the Mass. Soc. Cin., 1785–68.

General Tupper, the first Senior Warden, was born at Stoughton, Mass., 1738, and died at Marietta, Ohio, in 1792. He was a soldier of the French War, 1756–63; he was present at the siege of Boston, where he distinguished himself; he served through the Revolution, and was brevetted Brigadier-General in 1783. After the war he returned to his native State and represented the town of ~~Chelmsford~~ Chesterfield in the Legislature. In the measures adopted for the suppression of Shay's insurrection he took an active part. In May, 1785, he removed to what was then known as the North-west Territory, now the State of Ohio, and was one of the founders of the town of Marietta, in 1788. ~~In 1811, Bro.: Tupper was elected Master of Amity Lodge, of Janesville, Ohio.~~

Gen. Greaton, the first Junior Warden, was from Roxbury. Previous to the war, he kept a store for the sale of West India goods; he was a prominent Son of Liberty, was one of Roxbury's Committee of Fifteen to carry into effect the non-importation agreement, and was an officer in the Governor's Horse Guards, a Boston organization, composed of the elite of the citizens. He was in the Lexington battle in company with

his friends and neighbors, Warren and Heath. He served during the entire war of the Revolution, and was somewhat tardily rewarded with the promotion to the grade of Brig.-General, in 1784. Worn out in the service, Greaton returned to Roxbury on the disbanding of the army, and survived the journey only a short time, dying on the 16th of December following.

Timothy Whiting, one of the charter members, left the army in 1782; he was a member of Trinity Lodge of Lancaster (now located in Clinton, Mass.) He was a Past Master of Trinity Lodge, and a Past Senior Grand Warden of the Grand Lodge of Massachusetts. In 1809, he received a special dispensation from the Grand Master to constitute Pawtucket Lodge of Chelmsford.

The building used by the Lodge at the encampment on the Hudson was known as the Temple. Judge Advocate Gardner, in an interesting article in a late number of the *Magazine of American History*, gives the following account of the building:—"Rev. Mr. Israel Evans, Chaplain of the New Hampshire Continental Brigade, suggested the erection of a public building, primarily for divine service and meetings, and on Christmas Day the Commander-in-chief, in general orders, approved the scheme. The matter was put in charge of Maj.-Gen. Gates, and all regiments were called upon for their quota of laborers and materials. On Februrry 15, 1783, Gen. Washington issued general orders on the subject, in which he said: 'The new building being so far finished as to admit troops to attend public worship therein, after to-morrow it is directed that divine service should be performed there every Sunday by the several chaplains of the cantonment in rotation.' Levees were also held there at noon from April 15, 1783, until discontinued by Gen. Washington, June 11, 1783. The building was of rough lumber, one story in height, with roof pitched from four sides, and a row of windows directly under the eaves. In general appearance the structure resembled a block house."

In a note, Judge Gardner adds the following: "The Masonic Fraternity appear to have an Army Lodge which often met here. When the cantonment was broken up and the troops marched to West Point, the Lodge held meetings there."

APR 30 1921